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DESTITUTION IN THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS OF SCOTLAND.

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II.

THE causes already mentioned as having led in a remote manner to the late destitution, are chiefly of an external nature, or such as over which the sufferers had no direct control. The poor Highlander could not help those legislative enactments, or alterations in the commercial policy of the nation, which led to the reduction of duty on salt and barrilla, thereby depreciating the value of kelp. He had no power over the migration of the herring, or over the causes which led that capricious fish to desert these lochs and bays, where it was once so profitably caught and cured. He had no sway whatever over those impulses by which the price of black cattle rose and fell, and ruined his prospects. But there are remote causes yet to be considered, which led to the late destitution, over which the Highlander, and those who take an interest in his welfare have some degree of control, and cannot, like those already alluded to, be termed of an external nature.

These causes now come to be briefly mentioned, and discussed in the following order:—I. An excess of population; II. Early and improvident marriages; III. The lotting system, and the continued subdivision of lands; and IV. Bad husbandry, or the mismanagement of domestic economy.

Though these causes are thus classed for greater facility in treating of them, yet, in reality, they mutually take their origin from each other, and act, as it were, in concert, to render the condition of the poor Highlander more and more miserable. Be it therefore observed that an

Excess of population is an undoubted cause which led to the late destitution. From what has already been stated in reference to the parish of Kilmuir, it will be seen how enormously the population has increased for the last century. At the present day the lands are so overburdened with people, that, in favourable seasons they yield, under the system of husbandry pursued, but a very scanty livelihood for the population; so that when failure in the crop ensues, from whatever cause that may arise, destitution in a more or less degree is the inevitable consequence. No class of people can perhaps be found who are more patient, content, or enduring, than the Highlanders. Various were the hardships

which they have put up with in silence. Many and severe were the privations under which they have lived without uttering a sentence of complaint, even to their neighbours or intimate friends. Their very food at times has been such, that perhaps no other people could have subsisted upon it, and none would have done so with that forbearance and resignation which they so silently displayed. Their principal means of support in every season are potatoes. Few can afford to supply themselves with animal food, and even in maritime districts, there are many poor families who can procure no fish. Several causes have led to the increase of the population. Since the termination of local feuds—and latterly, since a general peace has shed its blessings over the country,—the Highlanders were permitted to enjoy a degree of quietude and repose previously unknown. Their young men, in place of being called out to take a share in the defence of their king and country, were left at home to branch out by degrees into separate families, and to increase a population already sufficiently numerous. If that most useful and prolific root, the potato, had not been raised in such quantities, it would have been impossible for the lands to afford any other crop which could possibly support the present population. About sixty-five years ago, there were no more potatoes planted than what was sufficient to serve the family at their Christmas dinner, after leaving a little for seed, which they bundled up in a mat of bulrushes, which, for security, was suspended to the roof-tree of their dwellings, as a safe keeping place, until the season of planting ensued. But the principal cause which led to the great increase of population, and consequently to the late destitution is,

Early and improvident marriages.

While the young Highlanders are a peaceable, orderly, and even industrious class of people, they are notwithstanding highly improvident as to the future. Possessed of an easy disposition, and blind to future consequences, they are too apt to be satisfied with such little earnings as they may get possession of, after months of hard labour in some distant part of the kingdom, and suppose that thereby, they are in circumstances which entitle them to enter upon the marriage state, and set up separate families for themselves. They live under the impression that a good wife is certainly worthy of her maintenance; and while so far they judge aright, they fail in taking into the account, how that maintenance is to be procured, or how provision is to be made for the number of little ones, who will, as a matter of consequence, group in a few years about their solitary hearths. No doubt, seasons of repentance will overtake them when too late, but on this subject they keep silent. They labour and toil, late and early, far and near, to keep their destitute families alive, and in despite of all their exertions, their children must live in poverty and rags. Yet the fate of one gives no warning to others. Each successive year adds to the number of these improvident youths; and nothing can be more evident, than when their desultory and precarious means of subsistence receive any check, either by the failure of public works, by sickness or by death, their poor families totally unprovided for otherwise, become a burden to their friends or to the public at large. And the very evil thus complained of leads to

The lotting system, and the continued subdivision of lands, which very materially unfitted the Highlanders to meet the late destitution.

When the population of the Highlands had by degrees increased considerably beyond its usual number, several proprietors deemed it necessary to divide farms which were originally somewhat extensive, into lesser lots and crofts, with the intention of supplying each family with less or more possessions. Though this was done with humane and charitable views, to the great personal inconvenience of the proprietors themselves, yet the system, from the facility and temptation it afforded to single men for taking up families, had, in a short time, of course, a very sensible effect upon the population. And pernicious as were the results of this first subdivision, the evil has always gone on increasing from continued subdivision and sub-letting, generally unknown to the proprietors. The common custom is, that when the son or daughter of a lotter or crofter marries, the newly-married couple are received by the parents of either party, with whom they live for some time as one family; but, eventually, the parents cut off a portion from their own little possessions for the young people, on which they build a house, and become liable to pay the original occupier a share of the rent in proportion to what was thus allowed them in sub-set. The old people who originally occupied the lot or croft, generally portion off their lands in as many shares, as they have sons and daughters unmarried. In some time after, one member of the family marries, another does the same, who immediately gets his share of the croft, and builds his house; then another and another, until the original occupier is ultimately left with a share no larger than any of those given away to his children. He stands as federal head over the whole, and is alone accountable for the rents to the proprietor. All this takes place on a tenure of land too small for the comfortable support of the original occupier. On many farms, by means of this baneful system, the population has doubled within the last sixteen years. These sub-tenants can never raise the rents from the produce of their possessions. At times they cannot keep a single cow upon them to furnish their children with milk. They trust to chance employment for means to pay for their contracted possessions, which tend in general to no purpose, but to bind them in poverty to one locality.

It must also be considered, that notwithstanding this continued subdivision, there are more families who have no lands than there are who have. An example of this may be given from Kilmuir, exclusive of the Government District attached to it. In the parish just mentioned, there were in February last, 521 families, and the number of lots and crofts, together with four farms occupied by large tacksmen, was only 190. From this, it is seen, that 231 families have no lands whatever from the proprietor. Of these 231 families, 101 hold shares of lots and crofts, as above described, and the remaining 130 families occupy no lands in any shape, but subsist upon the half-foot system, which will be immediately described. The vast number who occupy no land wish, of course, to have them, and rather than want some sort of profession in this respect, they would be content with anything; and thus they tend, if possible, to increase the evil, which is already too extensive and prevalent. Should the number of families be reduced to an equality with the number of lots and

crofts, the population after all would be sufficiently numerous. The occupiers of lots can keep in general no more than two cows and no horse, while the crofters whose shares are larger keep, of course, more cows, but are seldom able to keep any horse, with the exception perhaps of small ponies, which a few of them manage to have for assisting in the carrying home of fuel and other little necessities. Some are too apt to lay a great share of the existing poverty to the charge of the Highland proprietors; but it should be taken into consideration, that though the proprietors were in many cases to give a free grant of their lots and crofts to their present occupiers, poverty would not cease after all, owing to an excess of population living under a rude system of husbandry. From the example given in reference to Kilmuir, it will be observed that over more than one half the population of the parish, the proprietor has no control whatever. Out of 421 families, there are 231 who neither pay rent to the proprietor, nor do they consider themselves in any respect under his jurisdiction, while they live peaceably upon their own scanty earnings. Under such a state of things injury is done to all parties. The poor landless cottars are directly or indirectly a burden to the occupiers of land, whose circumstances they eventually injure, and when once injured, the proprietors suffer accordingly.

The "half-foot" system under which such a vast multitude of cottars contrive to eke out their scanty means of support comes now to be described. These people are undoubtedly the poorest and most dependent of all the Highland population. They generally rear their dwellings about the outskirts of large tackmen's farms, as well as in every locality where they can find a footing. They meet with kindness and indulgence to a degree which those to whom they are a burden can, in general, but ill afford. Such of them as raise small quantities of oats, do so in the following manner: The tacksman allots a portion of ground for them, which they till with the "cas-chrom," and when ready for sowing, the tacksman furnishes one-half of the seed, and the cottar the other half. The cottar then sows and harrows the ground, which he watches and protects until harvest, when he reaps it, securing one half of the sheaves for the tacksman as remuneration for the ground, and the other half for himself. In the same manner also the cottar raises potatoes for his family. As potatoes require manure, the tacksman allows him to cut sea-ware, which he carries in creels to the ground; and after receiving half the seed from the tacksman, and furnishing the other half himself, he plants the same, and watches over its growth, until he lifts the potatoes in harvest, when he gives one-half of the produce for the use of the ground, and has the other half for himself. Sometimes the cottar is permitted to have a cow which is allowed to range with the other cattle of the farm. In this case, besides the oats and potatoes which he raises on the "half-foot" system just described, the land-occupier generally gives him a piece of ground wherein to plant potatoes with the manure of his cow, the produce of which he keeps entirely for himself. For the cow and ground he pays the land-occupier partly, perhaps, in money, but for the most part, in labour, either as grass-keeper, or by cutting peats, mowing grass, reaping corn, or such other employments as are required about the farm. After this manner, therefore, that class of the population just spoken of, endeavour to earn

a livelihood; and while it is in no respect calculated to raise themselves to a state much above abject poverty, it proves a great bar in the way of agricultural improvement, and gives every encouragement to what has now to be considered—

Bad husbandry, or the mismanagement of domestic economy.

That little or no improvement can be effected in the various departments of husbandry, under the present excessive population, is a self-evident fact; and that much improvement is both susceptible and required, is an equally palpable truth. Where the processes of husbandry are either neglected or carried on under a bad system, the population depending on the same for their means of support, are necessarily unfitted for encountering such a visitation of Providence as the late destitution.

Throughout the Northern Islands of the Hebrides in particular the lands, from continued subdivision, are cast into lots so exceedingly small that the occupiers can keep no horses to plough or harrow the ground, or to execute those multifarious processes of labour, which are exclusively allotted to horses in other quarters of the kingdom. What is thus in other parts of the country performed by horses, the poor hard-toiled Hebridean must perform by himself. In lieu of the plough he must, late and early, ply his "cas-chrom," or crooked spade. This primitive kind of utensil resembles the stilt of a plough, with a straight piece of wood attached to the lower end of it, forming an obtuse angle, and having a socket of iron on the part which enters the ground. The stilt is held with both hands, and the lower end or "sole" is driven into the ground by means of a peg on which the right foot rests and presses. The instrument is exactly a crooked lever, in which the power is to the weight nearly as 1 to $3\frac{1}{2}$. Though the "cas-chrom" is much more expeditious in tilling than the common spade, yet it becomes a tedious and most laborious task to till several acres of ground with it. The consequence is that the poor people must begin the work of cultivation even as early as Christmas, and keep toiling at the same under the boisterous and rainy climate of their country, until the middle or end of May, ere their labours are finished. By being thus exposed to the inclemency of the weather they are seldom either dryly clad or shod. From this arises among them, the prevalence of inflammatory complaints, diseased action of the lymphatic system, as also, acute rheumatism, pleuritic diseases, typhus fevers, &c.

Besides that, the "cas-chrom" mode of tilling is both toilsome and tedious, it very much injures the ground, as it does not turn it up in that regular rotation which is accomplished by the plough. And this is not all: when cultivating with this instrument, it is found necessary to convert the field into long narrow ridges, rounded on the top by heaping up the earth to carry off the water. They are also made as crooked, irregular, and distorted, as the characters in the Greek Alphabet; and while the lotter has no more perhaps than four acres in all, much of even that is lost, by the broad and useless spaces which are left between the ridges.

When the ground is turned over the sowing commences, which is generally performed in a slow and awkward manner. The sower goes backwards, and having a fist-full of seed, he shakes his hand with the same three or four times, in a vertical position, before he disposes of it, and is

ready for the next. The harrowing then takes place, which the women for the most part execute by dragging after them the fatiguing instrument. Owing to the lightness of the harrow which the poor women are capable of dragging after them, the ground cannot be made sufficiently smooth, and to remedy this, they commence anew with another instrument called the "ràcan," which gives a smooth finish to the whole. The "ràcan" is merely a block of wood, having a few teeth in it, with a handle about 3 feet in length. The poor people must also convey sea ware from the shore, manure from their houses to the field, and peats from the hills to their dwellings, in creels on their backs, which is fastened there by a belt passing over their breasts. In harvest they have no alternative but to carry home the produce of their possessions the best way they can—the potatoes in creels, and the corn in bundles on their backs.

It will readily be acknowledged on all hands, that this bad system of husbandry can turn out to no real advantage, either to proprietor or tenant; and while the population continues as it is, it is no easy matter to effect any remedy. While possessions are so small, the occupiers of land can have no horse, and consequently no alternative is left them, but to drag out a weary existence in the manner just described. From the want of draining, enclosures, as well as from the tardy manner of cultivation, sowing is unavoidably very late, the consequence is, that ere the crops are ripe or ready for cutting, they are liable to be overtaken by the storms and hurricanes so incidental in the Highlands, particularly about the autumnal equinox. It is a correctly ascertained fact that the climate, though naturally wild and boisterous, may be greatly mollified by hedging, trenching, fencing, and improving the lands in the various modes so successfully practised in the South of Scotland. While the present condition of the Highlanders requires some great radical changes to render them more independent and comfortable, it remains with those who have the power, and are willing to exert it, both to devise and apply such remedies as are necessary for the accomplishment of an end so very desirable.

Having thus, at some length, endeavoured to trace out the most prominent of the remote causes which led to the late destitution, the immediate causes which led to the same come now to be briefly noticed.

On this part of the subject it is unnecessary to say much, as the causes from the various reports made by Highland clergymen and others regarding them, are already known to all. From the situation and circumstances of the Highlanders, already so fully mentioned, it will easily be perceived that they are in a condition utterly incapable of enduring, without much suffering, even a partial failure in the means whereupon they so scantily subsist. A total failure therefore exposes them at once to the ravages of dire famine. To the sad consequences of such a failure the Great Disposer of all events was pleased to expose them during the currency of the two last seasons. The Spring of 1835 was cold and inclement: sowing was consequently late, and from the wetness of the soil, the seed in many instances was destroyed, and never vegetated. The potatoes were seized by some unaccountable disease which generally prevented their growth, so that whole fields laid under them, appeared with scarcely a plant. Harvest came with torrents of rain, that prevented the crops which

would have been otherwise late, from filling and ripening; and after the same were cut down, it was impracticable to secure them in good condition. The straw was deprived of its substance, and could afford little or no nourishment for cattle. Meal was of inferior quality, and exceedingly scarce. Potatoes were the same. The stock of cattle on hand was much larger than usual, owing to the low prices; and while the people themselves might have contrived to subsist without complaint on their diminished stores, had they not, improvidently, kept an extra stock of cattle on hand to which they were under the necessity of giving the potatoes and grain on which they should have subsisted themselves; and, in many instances, they lost the cattle after expending their all to keep them in life. Never were they in more unfavourable circumstances to meet such a severe spring as that of 1836 turned out to be. Many had little or no seed to put into the ground. Others, who contrived to keep potatoes for seed, were afraid to plant them but in small quantities, as they exhibited symptoms of the disease of the former season. Sowing was even later than in the previous spring. The summer and autumn months were unprecedentedly wet, and before either corn or potatoes had attained to any degree of ripeness, they were overtaken by the snowstorm and severe frosts of October. Destitution had even then commenced, and it was heart-rending to have witnessed the manner in which many poor families passed the following winter. A similar Destitution is not remembered by any now alive. That of 1782 was by no means so severe in the Islands, yet "Bliadhna na peasrach" or "the pease-meal year," was sufficiently memorable to render it an era from which old Highlanders calculate dates and make other references. An idea may be formed of the severity and extent of the famine in that year, by perusing the following quotation from recently published "Memoirs of the Life and Works of the late Right Honourable Sir John Sinclair, Bart.": a gentleman enthusiastically devoted to the service of his country. "So cold and stormy was the summer of 1782, that the crops were late and unpromising. On the 5th of October, before they had time to ripen, a frost—armed with the vigour of a Greenland climate—desolated in one night the hope of the husbandman. The grain, frost-bitten, immediately contracted a hoary whiteness. Potatoes and turnips, already dwarfish, were further injured. The produce of the garden was destitute of its usual nourishment, and the fields yielded not one-third of an ordinary crop. No wholesome food could be procured, and disease as well as famine began to overspread, not only the whole North of Scotland, but even some districts in the South. On this occasion of general distress and alarm, the member of Caithness earnestly besought the interposition of Parliament." Well-timed relief was in this way procured, "and the whole cost of it was little more than £15,000, yet no less a number than 111,521 souls were rescued from starvation."

Several localities in the Northern Counties of Scotland suffered considerably from a hurricane of unexampled severity, which took place in the year 1807, and laid waste some of the districts which had availed themselves of the already-mentioned Parliamentary grant. No distress of this kind was afterwards felt until the year 1817, which, in consequence of the unfavourable nature of the preceding year, proved to be a season of considerable severity. The case of several districts was represented to

Government, and a supply of oats was at once allowed for the benefit of the distressed. From that year down to the two late seasons of destitution, there was happily no cause of complaint; and what has been already stated in regard to the severity of those seasons, renders any additional remarks on that subject wholly unnecessary.

The remote and immediate causes which thus led to the late destitution having been, so far, considered, it remains now to treat of the remedies taken for the immediate relief of the distressed, and of the ultimate means to be adopted in future to prevent the recurrence of similar distressing calamities.

THE PROPHECIES OF THE BRAHAN SEER, COINNEACH ODHAR FIOSAICHE.

BY THE EDITOR.

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[CONTINUED.]

BEFORE, however, proceeding to relate the remarkable prediction, and the extraordinary minuteness with which it appears to have been fulfilled, it may be as well to give the following particulars of the Last Seaforth's peculiar dream, *verbatim et literatim*, as supplied to us by a member of the Seaforth family, who shows an upmistakeable interest in everything calculated to throw light on the "prophecies," and who evidently believes them not to be merely an "old wife's tale":—The last Lord Seaforth was born in full possession of all his faculties. When about twelve years of age, scarlet fever broke out in the school at which he was living. All the boys who were able to be sent away were returned to their homes at once, and some 15 or 20 boys who had taken the infection were moved into a large long room, and there treated. After a week had passed, some boys naturally became worse than others, and some of them were in great danger. One evening, before dark, the attendant nurse, having left the dormitory for a few minutes, was alarmed by a cry. She instantly returned, and found Lord Seaforth in a state of great excitement. After he became calmer, he told the nurse that he had seen, soon after she had left the room, the door opposite to his bed open silently, and a hideous old woman came in. She had a wallet full of something hanging from her neck in front of her. She paused on entering, then turned to the bed close to the door, and stared steadily at one of the boys, lying in it. She then passed to the foot of the next boy's bed, and, after a moment, stealthily moved up to the head, and taking from her wallet a mallet and peg, drove the peg into his forehead. Young Seaforth said he heard the crash of the bones, though the boy never stirred. She then proceeded round the room, looking at some boys longer than at others,

When she came to him, his suspense was awful. He felt he could not resist or even cry out, and he never could forget, in after years, that moment's agony, when he saw her hand reaching down for a nail, and feeling his ears. At last, after a look, she shunk off, and slowly completing the circuit of the room, disappeared noiselessly through the same door by which she had entered. Then he felt the spell seemed to be taken off, and he uttered the cry which had alarmed the nurse. The latter laughed at the lad's story, and told him to go to sleep. When the doctor came, an hour later, to make his rounds, he observed that the boy was feverish and excited, and asked the nurse afterwards if she knew the cause, upon which she reported what had occurred. The doctor, struck with the story, returned to the boy's bedside and made him repeat his dream. He took it down in writing at the moment. The following day nothing eventful happened, but, in course of time, some got worse, a few indeed died, others suffered but slightly, while some, though they recovered, bore some evil trace and consequence of the fever for the rest of their lives.

The doctor, to his horror, found that those whom Lord Seaforth had described as having a peg driven into their foreheads, were those who died from the fever; those whom the old hag passed by, recovered, and were none the worse; whereas those she appeared to look at intently, or handled, all suffered afterwards.

Lord Seaforth left his bed of sickness almost stone deaf; and, in later years, grieving over the loss of his three sons, absolutely and entirely ceased to speak.

We shall now relate the circumstances connected with the prophecy, and continue an account of the Seaforths' connection with it to "end of the chapter."

Kenneth, the third Earl, had occasion to visit Paris on some business after the Restoration of King Charles the Second, and after having secured his liberty. He left the Countess at Brahan Castle, unattended by her lord; and, as she thought forgotten, while he was enjoying the dissipations and amusements of the French capital, which seemed to have many attractions for him, for he prolonged his stay far beyond his original intention. Lady Seaforth had become very uneasy concerning his prolonged absence, more especially as she received no letters from him for several months. Her anxiety became too strong for her power of endurance, and led her to have recourse to the services of the local prophet. She accordingly sent messages to Strathpeffer, summoning *Coinneach* to her presence, to obtain from him, if possible, some tidings of her absent lord. *Coinneach* was already celebrated, far and wide, throughout the whole Highlands, for his great powers of divination, and his relations with the invisible world.

Obedying the orders of Lady Seaforth, Kenneth arrived at the Castle, and presented himself to the Countess, who required him to give her information concerning her absent lord. *Coinneach* asked where Seaforth was supposed to be, and said, that he thought he would be able to find him if he was still alive. Kenneth applied the *Clach fhiosrachd* to his eye, and laughed loudly, saying to the Countess, "Fear not for your lord, he is safe and sound, well and hearty, merry and happy." Being now satisfied that her husband's life was safe, she wished Kenneth to describe

his appearance; to tell her where he was now engaged; and all his surroundings? "Be satisfied," he said, "ask no questions, let it suffice you to know that your lord is well and merry." "But," demanded the lady, "where is he? with whom is he? and is he making any preparations for coming home?" "Your lord," replied the Seer, "is in a magnificent room, in very fine company, and far too agreeably employed at present to think of leaving Paris." The Countess, finding that her lord was well and happy, began to fret that she had no share in his happiness and amusements, and to feel even the pangs of jealousy and wounded pride. She thought there was something in the Seer's looks and expression which seemed to justify such feelings. He spoke sneeringly and maliciously of her husband's occupations, as much as to say, "that he could tell a disagreeable tale if he would." The lady tried entreaties, bribes, and threats to induce *Coinneach* to give a true account of her husband, as he had seen him, to tell who was with him, and all about him. Kenneth pulled himself together, and proceeded to say—"As you will know that which will make you unhappy, I must tell you the truth. My lord seems to have little thought of you, or of his children, or of his Highland home. I saw him in a gay-gilded room, grandly decked out in velvets, with silks, and cloth of gold, and on his knees before a fair lady, his arm round her waist, and her hand pressed to his lips." At this unexpected and painful disclosure, the rage of the lady knew no bounds. It was natural and well merited, but its object was a mistake. All the anger which ought to be directed against her husband, and which should have been concentrated in her breast, to be poured out upon him after his return, was spent upon poor *Coinneach Odhar*. She felt the more keenly, that the disclosure of her husband's infidelity had not been made to herself in private, but in the presence of the principal retainers of her house; so that the Earl's moral character was blasted, and her own charms slighted, before the whole clan, and her husband's desertion of her for a French lady was certain to become the public scandal of all the North of Scotland. She formed a sudden resolution with equal presence of mind and cruelty. She determined to discredit the revelations of the Seer, and to denounce him as a vile slanderer of her husband's character. She trusted that the signal vengeance she was about to inflict upon Kenneth as a liar and defamer would impress the minds, not only of her own clan, but of all the inhabitants of the counties of Ross and Inverness, with a sense of her thorough disbelief in the scandalous story, to which she nevertheless secretly attached full credit. Turning to the Seer, she said, "You have spoken evil of dignities, you have villified the mighty of the land, you have defamed a mighty chief in the midst of his vassals, you have abused my hospitality and outraged my feelings, you have sullied the good name of my lord in the halls of his ancestors, and you shall suffer the most signal vengeance I can inflict, you shall suffer the death."

Coinneach was filled with astonishment and dismay at this fatal result of his art. He had expected far other rewards from his art of divination. However, he could not at first believe the rage of the Countess to be serious; at all events, he expected that it would soon evaporate, and that, in the course of a few hours, he would be allowed to depart in peace. He even so far understood her feelings that he thought she was making a pa-

made of anger in order to discredit the report of her lord's shame before the clan; and he expected that when this object was served, he might at length be dismissed without personal injury. But the decision of the Countess was no less violently conceived than promptly executed. The doom of *Coinneach* was sealed. No time was to be allowed for remorseless compunction. No preparation was permitted to the wretched man. No opportunity was given for intercession in his favour. The gallows was forthwith erected, and the miserable Seer was led out for immediate execution.

Such a stretch of feudal oppression, at a time so little remote as the reign of Charles II., may appear strange. A castle may be pointed out, however, viz., Menzies Castle, much less remote from the seat of authority and the Courts of Law, than Brahan, where, half a century later, an odious vassal was starved to death by order of the wife of the Chief, the sister of the great and patriotic Duke of Argyll!

When *Coinneach* found that no mercy was to be expected either from the vindictive lady or the subservient vassals, he resigned himself to his fate. He drew forth his white stone, so long the instrument of his supernatural intelligence, and once more applying it to his eye, said—"I see into the far future, and I read the doom of the race of my oppressor. The long-descended line of Seaforth will, ere many generations have passed, end in extinction and in sorrow. I see a Chief, the last of his house, both deaf and dumb. He will be the father of three fair sons, all of whom he will follow to the tomb. He will live care-worn and die mourning, knowing that the honours of his line are to be extinguished for ever, and that no future Chief of the Mackenzies shall bear rule at Brahan or in Kintail. After lamenting over the last and most promising of his sons, he himself shall sink into the grave, and the remnant of his possessions shall be inherited by a white-hooded lassie from the East; and she is to kill her sister. And as a sign by which it may be known that these things are coming to pass, there shall be four great lairds in the days of the last deaf and dumb Seaforth—Gairloch, Chisholm, Grant and Raasay—of whom one shall be buck-toothed, another hare-lipped, another half-witted, and the fourth a stammerer. Chiefs distinguished by these personal marks shall be the allies and neighbours of the last Seaforth; and when he looks round him and sees them, he may know that his sons are doomed to death, that his broad lands shall pass away to the stranger, and that his race shall come to an end."

When the Seer had ended this prediction, he threw his white stone into a small loch, by the side of which the gallows was erected, and declared that whoever should find that stone would be similarly gifted. Then submitting to his fate, he was hung up on high, and this wild and fearful doom ended his strange and uncanny life.

Sir Bernard Burke, to whose "Vissicitudes of Families" we are mainly indebted for this part of the Prophecies, says:—"With regard to the four Highland lairds, who were to be buck-toothed, hare-lipped, half-witted, and a stammerer—Mackenzie, Baronet of Gairloch; Chisholm of Chisholm; Grant, Baronet of Grant; and Macleod of Raasay—I am uncertain which was which. Suffice it to say, that the four lairds were marked by the

above-mentioned distinguishing personal peculiarities, and all four were the contemporaries of the last of the Seaforths.

We believe Sir Hector Mackenzie of Gairloch was the buck-toothed laird (*an Tighearna Storch*); The Chisholm, the hare-lipped; Grant, the half-witted; and Raasay, the stammerer.

Mr Macintyre sends us the following account of the Seaforth prophecy, and the Seer's death, as it is related at this day in the Black Isle:—

Coinneach's supernatural power was at length the cause which led to his untimely and cruel death. At a time when there was a convivial gathering in Brahan Castle, a large concourse of local aristocratic guests was present. As the youthful portion were amusing themselves in the beautiful grounds or park surrounding the castle, and displaying their noble forms and features as *they* thought to full advantage, a party remarked in *Coinneach Odhar's* hearing, that such a gathering of *gentlemen's* children could rarely be seen. *Coinneach* answered with a sneer, "that he saw more in the company of the children of footmen and grooms than of the children of gentlemen" (*Is mo th'ann do chlànn ghillean buird agus do chlànn ghillean stabuil na th'ann do chlànn dhaoin' uaise*), a remark which soon came to the ears of Lady Seaforth and the other ladies present, who were so much offended and provoked at this base insinuation as to the paternity of the Brahan guests, that they determined to have condign punishment on the once respected Seer. He was forthwith ordered to be seized; and, after eluding the search of his infuriated pursuers for some time, was at last apprehended. Seeing he had no way of escape, he once more applied the magic stone to his eye, and uttered the well-known prophetic curse (already given) against the Brahan family, and then cast the stone into a cow's footmark, which was full of water, declaring that a child would be born with two navels, or as some say, with four thumbs and six toes, who would in course of time discover it inside a pike, and who then would be gifted with *Coinneach's* prophetic power. As it was the purpose of his pursuers to obtain possession of this wonderful stone, as well as of the prophet's person, search was eagerly made for it in the muddy waters in the footprint, when, lo! it was found that more water was copiously oozing from the boggy ground around, and rapidly forming a considerable lake, that effectually concealed the much-coveted stone. The waters steadily increased and the result, as the story goes, was the formation of Loch Ussie (Oozie). The poor prophet was then taken to Chanonry Point, where the stern arm of ecclesiastical authority, with unrelenting severity burnt him to death in a tar-barrel for witchcraft.

It is currently reported that a person answering to the foregoing description was actually born in the neighbourhood of Conon, near Loch Ussie, and is still living. Of this I have been credibly informed by a person who several times saw him at the Muir of Ord markets.

We see from the public prints, our correspondent humorously continues, that the Magistrates and Police Commissioners of Dingwall contemplate to bring a supply of water for *Baile-Chail* from Loch Ussie. Might we humbly suggest with such view in prospect, as some comfort to the burdened ratepayers, that there may be, to say the least, a probability in the course of such an undertaking of recovering the mystic stone, so

long compelled to hide its prophetic light in the depths of Loch Ussie, and so present the world with the novel sight of having not only an individual gifted with second-sight, but also a *corporation*; and, further, what would be a greater terror to evil-doers, a *magistracy* capable, in the widest sense of the word, of discerning between right and wrong, good and evil, and thus compelling the lieges in the surrounding towns and villages to exclaim involuntarily—*'O si sic omnes!'* They might go the length even of lending it out, and giving you the use of it occasionally in Inverness.

When *Coinneach Odhar* was being led to the stake (not the gallows mark) fast bound with cords, Lady Seaforth exultingly declared that, having had so much unhallowed intercourse with the unseen world, he would never go to Heaven. But the Seer, looking round upon her with an eye from which his impending fate had not banished the ray of a joyful hope of rest in a future state, gravely answered—"I will go to Heaven, but *you* never shall, and this will be a sign whereby you can determine whether my condition after death is one of everlasting happiness or of eternal misery: a raven and a dove, swiftly flying in opposite directions will meet, and for a second hover over my ashes, on which they will instantly alight. If the raven be foremost, you have spoken truly; but if the dove, then my hope is well-founded." And, accordingly, tradition relates that after the cruel sentence of his hard-hearted enemies had been executed upon the Brahan Seer, and his ashes lay scattered among the smouldering embers of the fagot, his last prophecy was most literally fulfilled; for those messengers, emblematically denoting—the one sorrow, the other joy—came speeding to the fatal spot, when the dove, with characteristic flight, closely followed by the raven, darted downwards and was first to alight on the dust of the departed *Coinneach Odhar*; thus completely disproving the positive and uncharitable assertion of the proud and vindictive Lady of Brahan, to the wonder and consternation of all the beholders.

(To be Continued.)

"THE PROPHECIES OF THE BRAHAN SEER."—The Prophecies, now appearing in the pages of this Magazine, will be published in May next, in a separate form, with a lengthy Introduction and Appendix. As only a *limited* number is to be issued, parties wishing to secure copies should send in their names, at once, to the Publishers of the *Celtic Magazine*.

AN SMEORACH.—A Collection of popular Gaelic Songs, with Music in the Solfa Notation, by Hugh C. Gillies, teacher, Culloden, has just appeared, at a very low price; and, we understand that, if the demand justifies the venture, another will soon follow. We are aware that another collection, with English translations, and of a more ambitious character, by a well-known musician is pretty well advanced through the press. Such patriotic acts as these deserve recognition, always provided that we get the real article—not a hybrid of Gaelic airs and foreign improvements(!) We reserve our opinion as to this for another time and place. Meanwhile matters are looking up. *Hurrah for the Highlands!*

THE CLEARING OF THE GLENS.

BY PRINCIPAL SHAIRP, ST ANDREWS UNIVERSITY.

CANTO SIXTH.

THE SOLDIER'S RETURN.

I.

Seven Summers long had fired the glens
 With flush of heather glow ;
 Seven Winters robbed the sheeted Bens
 From head to foot with snow,
 And brought their human denizens
 Alternate joy and woe.
 When all those years were come and gone,
 One calm October day
 The dwellers of Glenmorriston
 Forth-looking from their huts at dawn,
 Beheld a traveller wandering on
 The long glen west away.
 Young he seemed, but travel-worn,
 More weak of gait than youth should be—
 A philabeg, but soiled and torn,
 Was round him—on his shoulder borne
 A tartan plaid hung carelessly.
 ' Whence comes yon stranger ? whither goes ?
 They each to other wondering cry—
 Is he some wanderer from Kintail ?
 Macdonald's land of Armadale ?
 Or Macleod's country, far in Skye ?
 Or haply some Clanranald man
 From southern market makes his way
 Back, where his home by hungry shore
 Hears the Atlantic breakers roar
 On Barra and Benbecula.'

II.

Unasked, unanswering, he passed on,
 None spake to him, he spake to none ;
 But while they questioned whence, and who,
 Among themselves, they little knew
 That this was Angus Cameron.
 Southward he turned, and noonday found
 Him high upon the mountain-ground,
 Whence he beheld Glengarry's strath,
 With its long winding river path
 Streaming beneath him ; and discerned
 Loch Quoich, amid dark Scours inurned.

And all around it, east and west,
 His eye wide-wandering went in quest
 Of the old homesteads that he knew,
 But the blue smoke from very few
 Could he discover; yet he wist
 The rest were lost in haze and mist.
 So west he turned through mountain doors
 That open downward on the shores
 Of lone Lochourn. In that deep pass
 Still lay the little loch, reed-fringed,
 With upper marge of greenest grass,
 And birks beyond it, autumn-tinged.
 He looked—the summer bothies bare,
 All ruinous sank in disrepair;
 From them the voice of milking song
 And laughter had been absent long.
 He paused and listened, but no sound,
 Save of the many rills that come
 Down corrie-beds through the desert dumb;
 And over all the voice profound
 Of the great cataract, high aloof,
 Down flashing from the rock-wall roof.

III.

The solemn Pass he erst had known
 Seemed still as lovely, but more lone,
 As westward on with weary pace
 He travelled, and no human face
 Looked on him, no sound met his ear
 That told of man or far or near.
 Late had waned the afternoon
 Ere he reached Lochourn's rough shore,
 No gleam by random breezes strewn
 Flitted its dark face o'er;
 'Neath leaden sky, the waters roll'd
 More drear and sullen than of old,
 And the silence of all human sounds,
 Since he had passed Glengarry bounds,
 Lay heavy on his loaded breast
 With something of a dim unrest.
 But one bright gleam of western day
 On the scarr'd forehead of Lurvein lay;
 And like an outstretched hand of hope
 Seemed beckoning toward yonder cope
 Of headland, that projects above
 The sheltered home beside the burn,
 Where first he met that young friend's love,
 Who thither will no more return.

IV.

But ere he reached the well-known spot,
 This way and that he turned in thought—

How 'neath that roof he should declare
 The burden of the tale he bare ;
 How show to those poor hearts forlorn
 The frail memorials he had borne
 From the far field by Ebro's wave,
 Where Ronald fills a soldier's grave ;
 The plaid, whose every thread was spun
 By Muriel's fingers—the holy book,
 Which from his mother's hands the son
 Even at their last leave-taking took—
 The plaid, which Ronald oft had wound
 'Neath cold night-heavens his breast around,
 Discoloured, by the grape-shot torn,
 In Angus' hands now homeward borne ;
 That book he oft with reverent heed
 By flickering camp-fires woke to read,
 That tattered plaid, that treasured book,
 Soiled with his latest life-blood's stains,
 On these his loved one's eyes must look—
 Their all of him that now remains.
 Then rose his inward sight before
 Those faces—not as long ago—
 But the mother's highbrow furrowed o'er
 Deep with the charact'ry of woe,
 Which suffering years must have graven there—
 And Muriel's cheek, though pale still fair,
 Her large blue eyes, thro' weeping dim,
 Gazing on these last wrecks of him.

V.

But when he reached that headland's crown,
 And stood beside the sole pine-tree,
 O'er the sheer precipice gazing down,
 Ah ! what a sight was there to see !
 Two roofless gables, gaping blank,
 In the damp sea-winds moss-o'ergrown,
 And choaked with growth of nettles rank
 The home-floor, and once warm hearth-stone.
 One look sufficed—at once the whole
 Sad history flashed upon his soul ;
 He saw that household's ruined fate,
 He knew that all was desolate.
 With face to earth he cast him down,
 As in a stupor long he lay,
 And when he woke as from a swoon,
 And looked abroad, last gleams of day
 Even from the highest peaks were gone,
 And the lone Loch lay shimmering wan ;
 From that waste desolated shore
 He turned away and looked no more.

VI.

From that home, now no more a home,
Up through the dusky pines he clomb;
Up and on, without let or bound,
Hasting away to the high lone ground
Where Knoydart, cloven by sheer defiles,

Yawns with torrent-roaring chasms,
Huddled screetan, and rent rock-piles,

Nature's work in her wildest spasms:
There, as the darkness deeper fell
And going grew impossible,
Beneath a rock he laid his length,
As one bereft of hope and strength,
And if no further step he passed,
Content that this should be his last.
The hope that had his heart sustained

Through years of toil to ruin hurled—
What shelter any more remained

In this forsaken world?
What but to share with this poor home
The desolation of its doom?
But they the true, the gentle-hearted,
To what strange bourne had they departed?
Dwell they in noisome city pent?
Or are they tenants now, where rent
None ask, in that drear place of graves,
Which Nevish-Loch at full-tide laves?
Or dwell they far o'er ocean—thrown
Like sea-waifs on some land unknown?

VII.

All through that night, I heard him tell,
Strange sounds upon his hearing fell,
Weirdlier sounds than shriek of owl,
Wild cats' scream, hill-foxes' howl,
As though the ancient mountains, rent
To their deep foundations, sent
On the midnight moan on moan,
Ghostly language of their own,
Converse terrible, austere,
Seldom heard by mortal ear.

Then in hurried blinks o' the moon

Cliff and crag dim-seen appeared
Haggard forms, like eldrich croon,

Or shapeless beings, vast and weird,
Formless passed before his face
Dwellers of that awesome place.

Angus had been used to bide

Foeman's shot and shell unmoved—

Badajos—Busaco tried,
 And found his mettle unreprieved.
 Never before face of man
 Had he quailed, but now there ran
 Creepings cold thro' all his frame,
 O'er his limbs strange trembling came,
 And the hair upon his head
 Rose erect with very dread
 Of this place—this awesome hour,
 When the nether world had power.
 All he had listened to, as a child,
 Of mountain glamourie dark and wild,
 To harrow up the soul with fear,
 Now palpable to eye and ear,
 Seemed gathered to confront him here.

VIII.

Never stood he so aghast,
 Never through such night had passed,
 But the dawning came at last :
 And when earliest streaks of light
 The eastern peaks had silver-barred,
 Behold ! his tarrying place all night
 None other was than Màm-clach-ard.
 Forward then, 'mid the glimmer of dawn,
 Through the rough Pass he wandered on,
 And one by one stars faded on high,
 As the tide of light washed up the sky :
 But when he reached the eastern door,
 Where that high cloven Pass looks o'er
 Locheil's broad mountains, grisly and hoar,
 The sun, new-ris'n from the under-world,
 Had all the glens beneath outrolled,
 Up the braes the mists had furled,
 And touched their snowy fleeces with gold.
 There far below, inlaid between
 Steep mountain walls, lay calm and green
 Glen Dessaray, bright in morning sheen.
 As down the rough track Angus trode
 The path that led to his old abode,
 Calm as of old the lone green glen
 Lay stretched before him long miles ten ;
 He looked, the braes as erst were fair,
 But smoke none rose on the morning air ;
 He listened, came no blithe cock-crowing
 From wakening farms, no cattle-lowling,
 No voice of man, no cry of child,
 Blent with the loneliness of the wild ;
 Only the wind thro' the bent and ferns,
 Only the moan of the corrie-burns.

IX.

Can it be? doth this silence tell
The same sad tale as yester-eve?
My clansmen here who wont to dwell
Have they too ta'en their last long leave?
Adown this glen too, hath there been
The besom of destruction keen
Sweeping it of its people clean?
That anxious tremour in his breast
One half-hour onward set at rest:
Where once his home had been, now stare
Two gables roofless, gaunt, and bare;
Two gables, and a broken wall,
Are all now left of Sheniebhul.
The huts around of the old farm-toun,
Wherein the poorer tenants dwelt,
Moss-covered stone-heaps, crumbling down,
Into the wilderness slowly melt.
The slopes below, where had gardens been,
Lay thick with rushes darkly green,
The furrows on the braes above
Where erst the flax and the barley throve,
With ferns and heather covered o'er,
To Nature had gone back once more,
And there beneath, the meadow lay,
The long smooth reach of meadowy ground,
Where intertwining east away
In loop on loop the river wound:
There, where he heard a former day
The blithe, loud shouting, shinty play,
Was silence now as the grave profound.
A few steps led to the Mound of the Cave,
A hillock strewn with many a grave,—
Lone place, to which some far and faint
Remembrance of Columbian Saint
Come, ages gone, from the Isle of Y,
Gave immemorial sanctity.
There children lost in life's first day
Whom to Kilmallie, that long way
They did not bear, were laid to sleep,
That kindred o'er them watch-night keep,
And mothers thither steal to weep.
There he himself in childhood's morn
Had seen two infants, younger-born,
His own sweet brothers, laid to rest;
And now he came in loving quest
To see their little graves, but they
From sight had melted quite away,—
'Neath touch of time's obscure effacing
Had passed unto the waste around,

And now no eye could mark the tracing
Twixt holy earth, and common ground.

X.

Then looking back with one wide ken,
Where stood the Farms, each side the glen—

Tome-na-hua, Cuil, Glach-fern,

Each he clearly could discern ;

Once groups of homes, wherein did dwell

The people he had known so well,

These stood blank skeletons, one and all,

Like his own home, Sheniebbal;

And he sighed as he gazed on the pathways untrodden,

"These be the homes of the men of Culloden!"

"This desolation! whence hath come?

What power hath hushed this living glen

Once blithe with happy sounds of men

Into a wilderness blank and dumb?

Alas for them! leal souls and true!

Kindred and clansmen whom I knew!

Their homes stand roofless on the brae,

And the hearts that loved them, where are they?

Ah me! what days with them I've seen

On the summer braes at the shealings green!

What nights of winter dark and long

Made brief and bright by the joy of song!

The men in peace so gentle and mild,

In battle onset lion-wild,

When the pibroch of Donald Dhu

Sounded the summons of Locheil,

From these homes to his standard flew,

By him stood through woe and weal,

Against Clan-Chattan, age by age

Held his ancient heritage:

And when the Stuart cause was down,

And Locheil rose for King and Crown,

Who like these same Cameron men

Gave their gallant heart-blood pure

At Inverlochy, Killiecrankie,

Preston-pans, Culloden Muir?

And when red vengeance on the Gael

Fell bloody, did their fealty fail?

Did they not screen with lives of men

Their outlawed Prince in desert and den?

And when their Chief fled far away,

Who were his sole support but they?

Alas for them! those faithful men!

And this is all reward they have!

These unroofed homes, this emptied glen,

A forlorn exile, then the grave."

ON GAELIC AND ITS TEACHING IN HIGHLAND SCHOOLS.

(A Paper delivered before the recent Educational Congress in Aberdeen.)

BY A. C. CAMERON, A.M., FETTERCAIRN.

THE subject of Gaelic and its teaching in Highland Schools has of late excited a large amount of interest, and has enlisted for its discussion many speakers and writers connected with the Highlands, as well as many others of our ablest and most eminent literary men. One can remember when Gaelic as a topic was not quite so fashionable. But every true Gael will rejoice at this change of feeling, although he must bewail the cause, the rapid decay of Gaelic as a spoken tongue. Let all vie with each other in their delicate attention to the dear old Language; much good will come out of the movement in its favour; if it die in the mouths of the people, it will live in the domains of Philology; Chairs of Celtic Education will be endowed and Professors paid for its teaching; while it will rank side by side with other Classic tongues, and be cultivated more and more in the higher walks of literature.

But why, you may ask, should I take up this subject when others, teachers in the Highlands, might be expected, in the light of their every day experience to do it more ample justice? My reply is, that, as no one appeared to offer himself, I did,—thinking that this Educational Congress (for the first time in the Capital of the North) ought not to pass, without reference to the much-agitated question of Gaelic Teaching in Highland Schools. And although I have not had very much to do with Gaelic or the Highlands for upwards of 30 years, everything pertaining to the “land of the mountain and the flood” has always had a large share of my attention, for there, from an early period of infancy, in a romantic and lonely vale, stretching along the sunny side of Schiehallion, my first acquirements in knowledge consisted of being able to read the Scottish and old Irish versions of the Gaelic Bible. My first outset as a teacher was also in the Highlands, so that I am not altogether without experience of the subject in question. With these preliminary remarks, I beg to lay before you what I have been able, amid the hurry of daily duties, and with short time, to put together. And before I take up the part of my subject, the Teaching of Gaelic in Highland Schools, which is the more important one at the present time to many members of the Educational Institute, permit me to make one or two observations on Gaelic as a Language. And 1st, as to its antiquity. You know, that of all the European languages now spoken, the oldest are Gaelic and Cymric, the two leading branches of the Celtic; also, that Gaelic is the native language of the people in the Scottish Highlands, in the Isle of Man, and in the north and west of Ireland; while Cymric is spoken by the people of Wales and of Bretagne, and was so by those of Cornwall till 1778. Celtic is now acknowledged to be one of the primitive Aryan tongues, of which Sanscrit may be the oldest. It may, but that very word sounds like a pure compound of two Gaelic roots, *Sean sgriob*, which mean *ancient writings*; and,

moreover, the *ar* of Aryan is the Gaelic *for*, and without doubt the root of, the Latin word *aro* (I plough), through which the term *Aryan* is explained.

The Celts migrated at a very early period, some say 1400, others 1700 years before the Christian era, from their home in Asia, and peopled all the southern and western kingdoms of Europe, from the Pillars of Hercules to the banks of the Vistula, and from the Hellespont to the shores of the Baltic. Out of these countries they were subsequently driven by the Hellenic, Romanic, and other more modern nations, to the regions where they are now found. Even if History and Tradition were wholly silent upon this point, we should have ample proof of their being the first inhabitants in the topographical nomenclature, purely Celtic, which remains imprinted, by these aboriginal tribes, upon the countries which they overran. I shall not occupy your time by quoting instances or authorities. If you desire such, look up the writings of the Philologists of Germany and of our own country; aye of the Champion of the Celts, my old and respected teacher, Professor Blackie, and also those of our very learned friend, Professor Geddes. How we should have seen the wide fields explored and the rich El Dorados won, had Gaelic been their mother tongue? Professor Geddes traces back the Celtic alphabet to be coeval with the oldest known—the Phœnician,—and shows that it, like Gaelic, consists of only 16 letters. It is curious to notice that the names of the letters in the Old Irish dialect mostly correspond with the names of certain trees of the forest, thus betokening the highest antiquity. Professor Geddes also traces the long lost Digamma of the Greek alphabet through the Celtic, to the period of primeval speech, as well as some Celtic constructive particles, back beyond all other languages, not even excepting the hoary Sanscrit. In regard to the Digamma I may remark, that in Bishop Bedell's Irish Bible, of which 700 copies were printed in the old Hibernian type in 1686, I find this interesting letter in its original shape, and with the force of our letter "F," occurring at least ten times to one that it does in our modern Gaelic editions.

The fact that the Celts were not polytheists like the Greeks and Romans, affords at least a presumptive proof of their earlier origin; and it is interesting to note that their Druidical priesthood bore a striking resemblance to the order of the Brahmins, the keepers of the Sanscrit records; and I will assert without fear of contradiction, that the Celtic Language need own no parent but nature; that the most of its names for animals, natural objects, and natural phenomena, are not derivable from any other known language, and that they reflect in their form and sound the animate and inanimate voices of creation.

A fatal blow to Celtic literature and poetry was given by the Danes in the 10th century, when they plundered and burnt I-columkill, in which were large repositories of old manuscripts. Edward I. also plundered the Monasteries of their Charters and historical documents, in order to destroy the written evidence of Scotland's ancient independence.

For those who wish an introduction to the Language and Literature of the Highlands, Professor Blackie's recent work will prove an interesting guide. He does ample justice to the Byrons, the Burnses, and the Cow-

pers of Gaelic Poetry, and he gives excellent metrical translations of their leading masterpieces. He makes no mention however of a certain martial lyric or war song composed for the Macdonalds, and recited to them, before the battle of Harlaw in 1411. Each of its 336 lines, with a few exceptions, is made up of two adjectives and two adverbial particles, making 664 adverbs, arranged in alphabetical order, and all expressive of some quality desirable in warriors, and intended to stir them up to deeds of bravery. I have never seen or heard of such a piece of composition in any language. It is to be found in Stewart's Collection of Gaelic Songs, published at Edinburgh in 1804. This poem evidently shows the wonderful plasticity or facility of composition inherent in the language. If you wish for other illustrations to show this facility, consult Professor Geddes' Lectures, and also an excellent paper read last autumn by Mr Rattray, and published in the "Educational News."

And now to the second head of my subject—The Teaching of Gaelic in Highland Schools, which has, since the passing of the Scotch Education Act, caused so much anxiety to those who have interested themselves in the education of our Gaelic-speaking people. This is owing to the fact that the Code makes no pecuniary provision for the teaching of Gaelic. It only provides that in districts where Gaelic is spoken, the children in the 2d and 3d Standards may be tested as to their intelligence through that language, while no condition is imposed as to the qualification of teachers or inspectors, who may or may not have a knowledge of Gaelic. So long as the former School Acts did not provide for the wants of the whole country, schools were supported in many districts of the Highlands and Islands by the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, the Gaelic School Society, the General Assembly's Scheme, and by the subscriptions of private individuals. In these schools, the teaching of Gaelic was either directly provided for, or at least not directly discouraged. The Education Committee of the Privy Council, from the commencement of their Grants in 1848 till the introduction of the Code, also encouraged the teaching of Gaelic by granting a bonus of £5 per annum to every qualified teacher. But now that by Act of Parliament schools and teaching must be provided according to one universal rule for all districts, the former voluntary agencies, which proved so beneficial to the Highlands, are to a great extent superseded, and the former methods of education with reference to the native language of the people are materially and seriously altered. From the latest reliable authorities, the Gaelic Language is still preached in at least 200 Highland parishes, and still spoken by at least 250,000 of the people, or in other words, there are in Scotland 50,000 children of school age, whose only language is Gaelic, or who at least use it more and understand it better during their school career than they do any other. The important question then arises—Are these children to be taught in the first place through the medium of their own language, or are they to be confined to the learning of English with as little help as possible from their mother tongue?

In the interests of Patriotism, Morality, and Religion, this question requires to be definitely settled, and the best means, according to the one method or the other, require to be used under the Legislature and the School Boards, in order that the youth of the Highlands, during their

limited period of school attendance may receive the education which will prove the best and the most lasting, and which will not turn out to be English imperfectly acquired at school to be forgotten in after life, or in other words, English with no Gaelic in School, and bad Gaelic with little or no English after their school-days are done. Professor Blackie, in his book, puts this very forcibly in the case of the modern Celt who was unable, from the scanty resources of his bilingual faculty, to give any better reply to the simplest enquiries of the worthy Saxon tyro, than "*There's no Gaelic on't, sir.*"

Such instances being now-a-days the rule rather than the exception, I may in further illustration quote the Professor's words, viz. :—"As a confused attorney often fumbles in vain about his tables for papers which are nevertheless there, so the Celt who knows a little shallow currency of colloquial English seems to have forgot his Gaelic also, and in all likelihood can read neither his Gaelic nor his English Bible without labour and sorrow. This is the natural result of the stupid system of neglecting the mother tongue, and forcing English down the throats of innocent children who can no more be changed into Saxons by a mere stroke of pedagogy, than the heather on the hills can blush itself into roses from hearing a lecture by the Professor of Botany."

The Committee of Council recently took steps to elicit the opinions of Highland School Boards as to the teaching of Gaelic in their Schools; and so far as is yet known, many of them have replied that it may be neglected and even ignored. If their object be to put it out of existence, to ignore it in school is to adopt the wrong plan, even that by which it will live all the longer. Neither can they kill it or drive it out of existence, for the experience of similar attempts elsewhere teaches that they must first kill or drive out the people who use it. But, on the other hand, let them lead it gently and use it largely for the promotion of intelligence; towards acquiring a good English education, and it will flourish for a time, though in most parts only for a short space, and English, the language of commerce and of the educated classes, will more easily and quickly find its way and become the vernacular of the lower and humbler classes of the people. Such a consummation may and may not be an unmitigated good.

Having thus far in a cursory manner stated the general bearings of the question, I shall proceed to lay before you the results of a general enquiry, which, after undertaking to read this paper, I have made upon the subject of Gaelic Teaching in the Highlands. I despatched within the last few weeks over 160 circulars, with schedules containing certain queries, and each accompanied with a stamped envelope for reply. About half the number were sent to teachers, and about 60 to ministers of all denominations throughout the Highlands and Islands, but without reference to any special principle of selection other than that of acquaintance-ship, which in some cases was followed. The remaining 20 copies were sent to Inspectors of Schools, one or two eminent landed proprietors in the Highlands, and several other gentlemen of position throughout the country, from whom proper information was likely to be obtained. I have received in return upwards of 100 reliable replies teeming with experi-

ences, vast and varied. I arranged the queries according to three three leading heads, viz. :—I. Under the System of Teaching previous to the introduction of the Code ; II. Under the Code Regulations ; and III. Under a Modification of the Code. Those divisions respectively refer to the past, the present, and the probable future. And now, after a careful analysis of the replies, and a pretty thorough sifting of the evidence obtained, I may state the result, as follows :—the numbers given being percentages of the aggregate opinions :—

I.—Under the system of teaching previous to the introduction of the Code, or keeping out of view its present regulation and system of Standards :—

1. To what extent should Gaelic be used in teaching the children?—47 per cent. would read Gaelic and teach it fully ; 42 would use it only for explanation of lessons ; 8 would ignore it wholly ; and 3 state no opinion.
2. Would the time required by them in learning to read Gaelic fluently be better spent in acquiring English alone?—51 answer no ; 45, yes ; and 4 are doubtful.
3. When the General Assembly's Committee, about 1826, started their scheme of High-schools, they issued a regulation that children should be first taught a course of Gaelic reading and after that English :—
 - (a) Was this a wise regulation?—41 reply in the affirmative, but some of these qualify their replies ; 47 deny the wisdom of the regulation ; and 12 give no reply.
 - (b) Was it carried out in practice?—15 reply that it was ; 30 that it was partially ; 31 that it was not ; and 22 are doubtful, or give no opinion.
 - (c) If not, were the parents or teachers to blame?—18 answer the parents ; 12 the teachers ; 30 both parents and teachers ; 2 neither ; and 38 doubtful, or give no reply.
 - (d) Would the children at the age of 10, or after four years' schooling, be better or worse English readers than if taught without Gaelic reading?—51 answer better with Gaelic ; 36 worse ; and 13 doubtful, or give no reply.
 - (e) Would it entail less labour upon teachers and pupils to take Gaelic reading after a fair course of English?—32 favour Gaelic teaching, and affirm it would entail more labour ; 55 state the contrary ; and 13 are silent or undecided.

II.—Under the Code regulations, as now in force :—

1. Is Gaelic reading now less taught than formerly?—81 state that it is less taught ; 8 deny this ; 9 are not certain, and give no reply.
2. Is the simple reading of Gaelic at all necessary, in addition to oral explanation, as a means towards securing passes in the standards?—18 reply that Gaelic reading is necessary, or ought to be ; 73 that it is not ; 5 are doubtful ; and 2 do not venture an opinion.
3. Should Gaelic be made a specific subject?—70 that it should ; 22 the contrary ; 1 is doubtful ; and 7 are silent.
4. Would children learn Bible knowledge and Scottish History more easily in Gaelic?—41 that they would ; 26 that they would, Bible knowledge only ; 28 are opposed to the idea ; and 5 give no reply.

III.—Under a modification of the Code :—

1. Were individual examination of children under 10 abolished, and Gaelic made a special and paid subject for children over 10—
 - (a) When should Gaelic reading be commenced?—22 reply at five years of age, or when children enter school ; 2 reply at 6 ; 2 at 7 ; 5 at 8 ; 14 at 9 ; 30 at 10 ; 4 at 11 ; 2 at 12 ; and 2 at 13 ; 9 cry out *never* ; and 8 are silent. Here the greatest number say at 10 years of age ; but 45 per cent. prefer below, or at 9 ; and 38 prefer a higher age.
 - (b) Should grammar in a simple form be attempted?—55 reply yes ; and 33 no, but not a few of them on the ground that Highland children always speak Gaelic grammatically ; while 12 give no reply.

IV.—Training of teachers, &c. :—

1. What special means should be adopted for training teachers?—33 wish students to

- attend Gaelic classes in Normal Schools; 23 that they attend the lectures of the Celtic Professor; 12 no training; 8 are doubtful; and 24 give no reply.
2. To what extent should salaries be increased for teaching Gaelic?—45 advocate grants as for other special subjects under the Code; 11 would increase the present salaries from $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$; 13 desire grants of from £5 to £10; 11 are against any increase; and 20 do not reply.

In addition to the above queries, I requested the parties addressed to favour me with any other particular information about Gaelic and its Teaching within their reach; assuring them, however, that their replies and information should be considered private, unless they otherwise desired, considering that this would have the effect of drawing out more freely the opinions that existed, and in this I have not been disappointed. The information is profuse and the suggestions are various and opposite in character. Upon one point, however, they appear to be almost all agreed, in the rapid decline of Gaelic both in and out of school. There appears to be large districts of the Highlands where, within a few years, it has almost entirely ceased to be used. In the Highlands of Perthshire, which I know best, it surprises me much to find that it is not taught there now, and that in two at least of its largest and most Highland parishes, the people are almost Saxonised, and only a small minority of the teachers know Gaelic.

Another striking fact presents itself. The replies shew that at least 20 per cent. of my list of clergymen, teachers, and others throughout the Highlands, who know Gaelic and whose duty it is to use it, make no secret of their wish to see it dead and gone. A teacher in the West Highlands writes that the Committee of Presbytery who annually examined his school never asked whether the children could read the Bible in their native tongue. Another intelligent teacher in the North-West Highlands states that he taught Gaelic successfully before the introduction of the Code and was paid for it, as many others were, in terms of his Government certificate; but that it is now necessarily neglected in their schools, as the Inspectors ignore it, and besides, "School Boards, as a rule, disapprove of its being taught, for they are composed of lairds, factors, clergymen, doctors, and sheep-farmers—classes which generally have very few Celtic sympathies, indeed a strong desire to have the whole race Saxonized right off,—and although teachers may continue from a sense of duty and patriotic motives to teach the vernacular, such teaching is not efficient as the grants are not thereby increased."

A worthy Parish Minister in Argyleshire attributes much of the prevailing ignorance and immorality to the want of Gaelic teaching, and deplores that "children who have been years at school can neither read their own language, nor any other as they ought"; and adds, that "in some remote parts a puppy of a Highland laird may denounce Gaelic and Gaelic teaching, and have his whims too frequently gratified by obsequious tenants and schoolmasters." Yet he knows that "many schoolmasters have done a great deal of good by teaching thousands of children to read their Bibles at home for their own spiritual edification and that of their parents, who could neither understand English nor read Gaelic."

Take also the following remarks sent me by a good old minister, of whose piety and truth I once knew well, now located in one of the remoter Hebrides. He says, "I am pained with the horrible fact that one-seventh

of the Gaelic-speaking population cannot read the Word of God in their native tongue, and it is disgusting to see the manner in which some teachers speak, write, and translate our expressive language, powerful in its very simplicity."

And sad to say the same state of matters is not confined to teachers and teaching, it extends to preachers and preaching. An excellent Gaelic scholar and an eminent divine, the Rev. Alex. McGregor of Inverness, favours me with his experiences, but I prefer to quote from a published paper of his in the *Celtic Magazine* of July last, and I only wish time and space would allow me to quote the whole of it. Writing about the "Present Position of Highlanders," he states that "preachers and teachers possessing a thorough acquaintance with the Gaelic language, the mother-tongue of the Highlanders, are become 'few and far between.'" Also that as "preachers are possessed only perhaps of a meagre provincial knowledge of Gaelic, orally acquired in whatever district may have been their birth-place, they go blundering and stammering through their uncouth addresses, regardless of the idiom, grammar, and beautiful structure of the language, and thereby eliciting the smiles of the heedless, as well as the sorrow of the pious and the devout." And further, to quote his words—"Can it be permitted in a highly privileged nation that hundreds of thousands of our people should remain unable to read the Word of God in their own language, and should be denied the privilege of listening to a purely preached Gospel in that language!—the language that raises their souls in devout aspirations to the living God, and the language which alone comes home to their minds with enchanting power." And all this he states is owing to the system so long practised, whereby Gaelic is not only neglected, but despised by the better classes, and, in consequence, banished and utterly excluded from the schools, as a thing not to be tolerated.

(To be concluded in our next.)

SHERIFF NICOLSON ON OSSIAN.—In a lecture on the "Poetry of the Scottish Highlands" recently delivered before the Edinburgh Literary Institute, the genial and learned Sheriff Nicolson "gave in his adhesion to the authenticity of the poems collected by Macpherson under that name (Ossian), and protested in vigorous terms against the impudence and effrontery of Saxon critics who dared to speak on this question without having a single Gaelic word to bless themselves with. To the question whether these poems were really good and worth reading, he answered unhesitatingly in the affirmative; and asked his audience, after having given them a specimen, whatever they might believe as to the authenticity of the Ossian poems, at anyrate to believe in their inspiration. Passing to the lyric poetry of the Highlands, he said it was settled that this did not date farther back than the last 300 years. This lyric poetry might be said to be a *terra incognita*, of the natural beauty and richness of which no stranger had any idea; and in order to their better appreciation of his statement on this point, the learned lecturer favoured his hearers with a few choice *morceaux* culled from four poets, who, he said, had been acknowledged to stand in the front rank of the Highland bards."—*Glasgow Highlander*.

Correspondence.

NORTH UIST AND BENBECULA:

TWO SONNETS BY PROFESSOR BLACKIE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CELTIC MAGAZINE.

SIR,—In the *Inverness Courier* of 11th January, I was amused by finding a letter from the well-known Celtic scholar, Mr Carmichael of Creagory, Benbecula, in which along with a pleasant account of the mildness of the climate in those far western regions, there was an allusion to certain verses which I had written in disparagement of the aspect of Nature in that part of the world. The passage in the letter is as follows:—

We still have primroses in our garden, and we have had a succession of them there all the year round. And, besides primroses, we have just now in bloom daisies, marigold, forget-me-nots (*myosotis dissitiflora*), carnations, gladioli, geraniums, and roses. A cynical poet says—

As well seek roses in December
As faithfulness in women.

At the present time we could give this misanthrope a handful of the most beautiful carmine roses to cure him of his disease. Your friend Alick, who follows his mother in her love of flowers and plants, is sending you some rosebuds and carnations as a Christmas gift. Several of our rose trees in front of the house have rosebuds in different degrees of development. We have had Christmas roses and chrysanthemums in flower for some time past, and we have the crocus, tulip, and narcissus already far advanced.

Of course all these are grown in the open air, and without any artificial heat whatever. Nor need I hardly remind you how completely exposed our house and gardening are to the Atlantic gales, nor that when we came here four years ago, the surroundings of our house were in a state of nature. I mention these things to show that something, even of the poetic as well as the prosaic productions of nature, can be grown, and that in great delicacy and beauty, even in Benbecula, the scathing anathema of the high-souled Altnacraig notwithstanding!—

O, God forsaken, God detested land,
Of bogs and blasts, and moors and mists and rain.
Where men with ducks, divide the doubtful strand,
And shirts when washed are straightway soiled again!

This is New-Year's day, and a most delightful day it is. The wind is calm and the sun is warm and bright.

Now, what I have to say in reference to this matter is, that the four lines here quoted were not part of a serious composition, but a skit of good-humoured banter in reference to an accident that befell the linen of myself and Inspector Jolly, when hospitably entertained in those parts. But I did write a serious composition—fourteen lines of a sonnet—which, as they have not yet been printed, I may as well give to the light on the present occasion. A word of explanation as to the opening line is required. When in that part of the world, I ascended the Ben—not a very high one—from which the Island of Ben-Becula takes its name—and, of course, had a free survey of that flat country in all the range, from the mountains of Harris in the North to the heights of Barra in the extreme South. I also had, of course, a full view of the extraordinary manner in which the east shore of the country is cut up by irregular

tongues of water that give it a drenched appearance, which, combined with the bleakness of the moors, and the blackness of the peat-bogs, and the smoke of the burning kelp, produce an effect not at all genial to the eye of the æsthetical tourist. When making this bleak survey from the height, I was informed by my fellow-traveller, that a learned gentleman, whom he had decoyed into those regions, on casting his eye round, had given vent to his feelings in a grim iambic, thus—

O, God forsaken, God detested land !

With which sentiment at the time, I felt only too much inclined to agree. I had not, however, been long in the country before I learned that the flat islands in those extreme regions, are like a medal, with copper on one side and silver on the other. The side exposed to the Atlantic, so far from presenting the wet and rugged aspect of the eastern shore, is chiefly made up of long stretches of grassy machars, redolent of rich clover, abounding like the Homeric Argos, in horses, and producing milk and butter of the most delectable savour, and the most nutritious quality. Considering this, and reflecting on how many harsh and uncharitable judgments both of men and things are passed in the world, from the hasty trick of making the worse aspect of a thing pass for the whole, I expressed my better judgment in the following sonnet :

NORTH UIST.

"O, God forsaken, God detested land,
Half drowned in water, and half-swathed in mist,
With leagues of ragged waste on either hand,
And by the Sun's rare glimpses coldly kissed !
Say, did the Almighty Regent of the sky,
Ordain this tract for penal reprobation,
Or did he turn his back, and leave half dry
The land, at half the third day of creation ?"
Nay, say not so : God never turned His back
On any spot ; but here for me and thee
Of green delights He left a shining track
In grassy swells that fringe the bright blue sea,
And fragrant knolls, where the fresh sea breeze passes
O'er big-boned men, stout lads, and buxom lasses.

To which old lines I add the following, dashed off to-day, by way of registering in verse some of the floral contents of Mr Carmichael's letter :—

"O, God forsaken, God detested land,
Of bogs and blasts, and moors and wind and rain !"
So wrote some shallow fool, with hasty hand,
As fools are wont to spate themselves the pain
Of looking 'neath the skin. Here, on this strand,
Lashed by the white scourge of the seething main,
And where fierce Æolus gives his bellowing band
Free swing to range with wild mistempered rein ;
Even here—O come and see! while Winter's sway
Is strong with you, and Nature torpid lies
In frosted lea, stiff pool, and hoary brae—
We spread our Summer greenness to mild skies,
And rose and primrose bloom in well-trimmed plot,
And marigold, and sweet forget-me-not.

—Yours, &c.,

JOHN STUART BLACKIE.

EDINBURGH, 16th Jan'y, 1877.

K Y L E.

—o—

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CELTIC MAGAZINE.

BALLYGRANT, ISLAY, February, 1877.

SIR,—In the *Celtic Magazine* of this month, I observe a paragraph headed "Kyle," in which a correspondent alludes to my suggesting *caille* "wood" as the etymon of "Kyle," and then he refers to "Kyle" as derived from *Caol*, a narrow passage of sea or strait. The whole paragraph shows how a person that follows *a priori* methods in comparative philology is led entirely astray; for such methods are as migratory in comparative philology as they are in the pure physical sciences. Kyle, the name of a part of Ayrshire, and Kyle, a corruption of *Caol*, meaning "strait or "sound," are no more the same words than are *pen*, "an instrument for writing," derived from the Latin *penna*, and *pen*, "a fold," from the Anglo-Saxon *pyndam*. The "Kyles of Bute" is an English rendering of *Na Caoil Bhodach*, "The Bute Straits." Here *Caoil*, the plural of *Caol*, i.e., *Caoil*, is transformed into *Kyles*.

Calais is by no means identical with *Caolas*, "a strait or sound"; on the contrary, this name is of Teutonic and not of Keltic origin. It was anciently written Waleys or Galeys, which is equivalent to "Wales," and was so called because a remnant of Kelts was there environed by Teutonic settlers. All Teutonic nations have always called the neighbouring tribes by the name of Walsche, that is Welshmen, "foreigners" or "strangers." The Slavs and Germans called the Bulgarians, who were originally Turanians from Asia, Wlochi or Wolvchi, and the country in which they settled Wallachia; and their Teutonic neighbours named the Kelts of Flanders and of the Isle of Walcheren, Walloons. Valland is the name given to North-western France in the Scandinavian Sagas, and in the Saxon Chronicle Wealand signifies the Keltic portion of Armorica. The Anglo-Saxons called the Keltic inhabitants of Britain the Welsh, and all that portion of the country not conquered by them Wales, and the German name of Italy is Walschland. The name Wales is a corruption of Wealhas, the plural of Wealh, "foreigner." Cornwall was formerly written Cornwales. The first part of this name, *Corn*, means "horn," and in an extended sense projecting land resembling a horn. The chroniclers invariably speak of North Wales and Corn-Wales. The Britons of Strath Clyde are called Walenses in the charters of the Scoto-Saxon Kings. Wal in German means anything "foreign" or "stranger," *waller* is a "stranger," *wallen*, "to wander or move about," and *walnut* is "foreign nut." The Sanskrit *m* frequently becomes *w* in the Gothic language, and according to this phonetic law, the German Wälsch is traced to the Sanskrit *mlech*, which signifies an indistinct speaker.

The Keltic and Romance *g* and the Teutonic *w* are convertible letters; which account for Waleys passing into Galeys and subsequently into Calais. Walter and William are Gualtier and Guillaume in French. The

Prince of Wales is "le Prince de Galles," and Wales is the "pays de Galles."

The Cælic name *Gall*, which means "foreigner" or "stranger," is the equivalent of the Anglo-Saxon *Wealh*; hence the Scandinavians in olden times were called *Goill*, "strangers," and the Hebrides have been called from them *Innse Gall*, "Isles of Strangers." The Lord of the Isles was called *Rìgh Fionn-Ghall*, "King of the Fair Strangers" or Norwegians. A Dane was called *Dubh-Ghall*, "Black Stranger," not because his hair or skin was darker than that of the others, but on account of his being a greater stranger. The Scottish Lowlanders are called by the Highlanders *Goill*, and the Lowlands are called by them *Galltachd*. The more remote Lowlanders they call *Dubh-Ghoill* as they did the Danes. In a similar manner they call the Irish of Connaught and Munster *Dubh-Eirionnaich*, Black Irishmen. Like the Highlanders as regards Lowlanders, the Gaelic-speaking Irish also call the English-speaking Irish *Goill*. Galloway in Scotland and Galway in Ireland are names derived from *Gall*, and mean "the stranger's country." *Gallabh*, the Gaelic name of Caithness, is identical in meaning with the preceding two. The Bretons call a Frenchman *Gall*.

The names Connell, Corran, Cregan, and Craignish have nothing whatever to do with the narrowness of the ferries so called. Connell is from *Con-thuil*, "meeting of floods or currents"; Corran signifies anything bent or twisted; a sickle; a semi-circular bay; a point of land like a hook or sickle. The word is derived from *car*, "a twist or bend." It is from its peculiar shape that Corran ferry is so named. Cregan is the Gaelic *Craigan*, which means a rocky place. The name Craignish is partly Gaelic and partly Norse. The first part *Craig* = *Creag*, means "rock," and the second part—*nish* = *ness* signifies "headland." Danish *Naes*, "a headland." Hence Foreness, Sheerness, Foulness, Wrabness, Caithness, Tarnet Ness, Fife Ness, The Naze, in Norway and in Essex. In the West Highlands *Naes* takes the form—*nish*, so Craignish means "Rock headland," and at first denoted that which is now called the Point of Craignish. In Islay are the headlands Truternish and Stremnish, which is the same name as Strönness, and means "the headland of the current." In Skye is Trotternish, as well as several other headlands, the names of which end in—*nish*.—Yours, &c.

HECTOR MACLEAN.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.—The second chapter of the "Superstition of the Highlanders," by Mary Mackellar, will appear in our next; also a Memoir, by the Editor, of John Mackenzie, editor of "The Beauties of Gaelic Poetry"; author of "The Life of Prince Charles, in Gaelic"; Compiler of the English-Gaelic part of Macalpine's Dictionary, and several other works.

THE HIGHLAND CEILIDH.

BY ALASTAIR OG.

[CONTINUED.]

—o—

MORT NAN LEODACH.

"EH! charaide," arsa Coinneach Friseil, "dh'fhag thu cachala innte. Cha'n eil guth ma Chloinn 'ic Leoid a bha 'n Eilean Loch Thollaidh an deighe Clann 'ic Bheathain. Bha dhithis bhraithrean aig an am so, a reir mo sgiala-sa, a' fuireach anns an Eilean, cuide ris an uachdaran. Latha dheth na lathaichean chaidh na fir—a dhithis bhraithrean—a bhreacach air Abhuinn Iugh. Ma dheireadh dh'fhas iad sgìth dheth an obair sin, shuidh iad, a leigeil an anail, agus chaidil iad ris a ghrein. Dar a dhuais iad rinn iad guim eadar iad fhein gum marbhadh iad am brathair—an t' uachdaran dligheach—a bha aig an dearbh am, gu neo-chulmhor anns an eilean cuide ri mhnaoi 's ri chuid cloinne; agus gum biodh an oighreachd a rèis aca fhein. Dh-fhalbh na reabaltaich, agus tachradair am brathair agus a dhithis mac oga riu, air an rathad, agus mharbh iad ann an sin iad, agus thiodhlaic iad fear dhiu anns' a ghleann ris an canair gus an latha 'n diugh Gleann Bhadaidh na h'Aisg. Ghabh iad air an aghart dhachaidh a dh' ionnsuidh an tighe a bh'aca ann an Gearloch. Ach thigeadar eadar na fir air an rathaid, mu dheighinn cuid gach fir dheth 'n oighreachd, agus mharbh an dara fear am fear eile."

"Dar a chunnaic a bhanntach bho chd mar thachair, rinn i, gu mulla-dach deurach, dìreach air seann duine glic a bha fuireach ann an Achadh-deasdal, agus dh'innis i dha mar a thachair. Thug esa comhairle oirre rian air choir-eigin a dheanamh air am aodach a bh' air a chloinn a ghoid a mach as an Tigh Mhor. Mo na se tigh-slaite a bh' ann cha robh sin duilich ri dheanamh. Ghearr dithis ghillean tapaidh an caol, 's thug iad a mach na leintean fola troimh chliathaich an tighe. Thug a bhanntach a casan leth a cho grad sa bha na buinn do Bhrathain, air ionnsaidh Mhic Coinnich, a caraide dileas fein. Dar a chual esa mar a bha, rinn e bonn dìreach air aghart do Dhun-edin, chon an robh an rìgh. Thilg e na leintean fuilteach air a bheulabh, dh'innis e dha uile mar thachair, 's thug an rìgh dha airgid-cheann á Clann 'ic Leoid; ordugh clòidh is teine orra; agus an sgrios deth aghaidh na talmhainn; am fearann a thoir uatha; agus a chumail uatha gu brath. A nise 's ann an deighe so a thainig Clann a Choinnich, agus a sgiursaidh iad na Leodaich air falbh, mar dh'innis thusa 's a sgeulachd. Innsidh mi 'nise," arsa Coinneach, "mar thachair"

LATHA NA LUINGE.

BHA tighearna Macleoid air Raarsair uair agus chuir e 'n sòn mhac a bh'aige mar bhara-dighinneachd a dh'iarraidh nighean fear a Chaisteal Ruaidh air do'n oganach a bhi aig aois posaidh. Dar a rainig e'n Caisteal Ruadh bha-sa ga fialaidh furanach ris, agus bha bhan-oglach Ghaidhealach, nighean an duin uasail, deonach oighre Mhicleoid a phosadh. Bha brath-

air anmanta aice, agus cha tugadh e dha mar mhnaoi i gus am faiceadh e gu de seorsa fear a bh'ann a Macleoid—am bu diulanach tapaidh agus gaisgeal e—ach am faigheadh e mach an robh e na leomhann tapaidh a thaobh naduir. Leis an ana-miann's ann a chuir e fein agus an t-oganach eile, a bha coltach a bhi na bhrathair aige, dulan air a cheile leis a chlaidheamh, agus mar bha'n diom-buaidh, mharbh MacConnich oighre Raarsair anns a chomhstri. An deighe so chomhairlich tighearna Ghearrloch da Murchadh a mhac a dhol a dh'iarraidh nighean tighearna Raarsair mar mhnaoi, agus thionaladh prasan dheth na daoine bu tapaidh bha 'n Gearrloch, gu falbh cuide ri Murchadh a dh'iarraidh na mna, agus mar a bha 'n diom-buaidh anns a chuis, co bha na ghille-suirthich aig mac tighearna Ghearrloch ach mac fear a Chaisteal Ruaidh, a mharbh mac MhicLeoid Raarsair dar a chaidh e dh'iarraidh phiuthar ri posadh, agus bha seann fholachd aig muinntir Raarsair da dh-fhear a Chaisteal Ruaidh air son an t-oighre ac' a mharbhadh. Dh-fhalbh am prasan a Gearrloch gu neo-ghealtach, agus rainig iad ceann a deas Raarsair, gu aite, mar theirear ris gus an latha 'n diugh, "Corran Oighre." Se sin do bhrigh 's gun deach an eanchain a chur a oighre Ghearrloch ann a sud leis na clachan. Dar a chunnaic na Raarsairich gur e mac fear a Chaisteal Ruaidh a bh'aige na ghille-suirthich, thionail iad muinntir Raarsairgu leir, a chum 's gumarbhadh iad le cheile iad. Chaidh Murchadh Ghearrloch air tir roimh chach, agus mas b'urrainn na Gearraich a chobhar, mharbh na Raarsairich leis na clachan e. Dar a chunnaic na Gearraich gu 'n deach Murchadh a mharbhadh chaidh iad dheth an tabhail. Cha leigeadh iad a h-aon deth na Raarsairich a dh-ionnsuidh na birlinn. Thainig a chiad bhata dhiubh a dh'ionnsuidh na birlinn, ach chaidh gach ceann dheth amhaich dhiubh mas d'fhuair anam dhiubh air bord. M'as da tharadh iads' uileadh a chisleachadh thainig bata eile dheth na Raarsairich air taobh eile na birlinn agus fhuair cuid dhiubh-san air bord. A chuid sa chuid deth, thoisich a chomh-stri 's thainig an obair, 's an traoghais. Bha choltas air muinntir Ghearrloch gu'm faigheadh iad damaiste, ach thainig oganach a Chaisteil Ruaidh a nuas a deireadh na birlinn, 'us claidheamh anns gach lainh aige, agus rinn e treuntas fhuilteach, agus cobhair mhor ri muinntir Ghearrloch, ach bha na Raarsairich a tighinn gu math teann orra ged nach da mharbh iad duine. Bha 'n cath a fas cruaidh. Bha aon duine ann a mbuinntir Ghearrloch a theap ana-cothrom fhaighinn—Ruairidh Mor Mac Eachainn Ghlais—fear da theaghlach Bhadachro, agus chaidh e fhein agus fear dheth na Raarsairich ann an combh-stri ri cheile, ann an toiseach na birlinn, le 'n claidheanan, agus bha choltas gum buadhachdadh an Raarsaireach air mac fhir Bhadachro. Thainig Coinneach Mor MacCoinnich chon an robh iad, agus thuirt e ri mac fhir Bhadachro, "an dith-bidh air an ole, am bheil an siogaire sin a cumail riut fhathast." "Oh tha," ars esa, "ach a Choinnich nan cumadh tusa iomlaid da bhuille ris, ach an glanain-sa mo shuilean, chitheadh tusa mar a thachradh dha," agus rinn Coinneach mar sud. Dar a fhuair Ruairidh Mor Mac Eachainn Ghlais a shuilean glan, le alt a dha ordaig a shuathadh unnta, chuir e leis an ath bheum dheth a chlaidheamh ceann an Raarsairich a mach air taobh na birlinn.

Chuairtich na Leodaich i cho mor 's nach robh rian aig na Gearraich an cumail air an ais. Ma dheireadh, 's ann leis a phrais a bh'ac' a bruidh

am bédh a thilgeil innt' a chuir iad fodha an ath chulaidh dheth na Raarsairich. Chaidh a phrais troimhe, 's chaidh i fodha leis na h-uile mac mathar a bh'innte shluagh.

Chunnaic iad t'eile tighinn, 's cha robh rian air na bh'innte-sa chumail air an ais; oir, theirig a h-uile meadhon a bh'ac' anns a bhirinn, ach an t'seana-mhusgaid dubh a dhiult strad fad an latha. Rug Fionnla Dubh a Mealabhaig oirre, dar a chunnaic e mar bha chuis a dol, agus thubhairt e, 's e ga cumail dìreach ris na bh'air dara taobh na culaidh, "Bho nach da fhreagair thu fad an latha 'n ainm Dhia, freagair a nise an ainm an donais." Fhreagair i, agus chuir i na bh'air dara taobh na culaidh a mach a thaobh an cuil air a mhuir, agus thionndan i air a beul-foipe leis a chorr. Dar a chunnaic am Faobaire MacCaoidhean a marbhag a bh'air muinntir Raarsair leis na Gearraich thainig e dh'ionnsuidh chladaich. Fhuair e greim air tobha-tìre na birlinn agus char e 'na cho-bhonn gu 'toir air tìr. Ach thug fear dheth na Gearraich an aire dha, agus thug e 'n duidear-leum suas, le seann tuagh mheirgeach a bh'aige, ghearr e'n tobha air gualainn na birlinn, agns thuit am Faobaire Mòr MacCaoidhean, leis an tarruing, a thaobh a chuil, agus bhris e enaimh a dhroma.

Cha robh duine treun a nis' an Raarsair. Bha corr agus trì fìthead banntrach ann an oidheche sin, air chul na chaidh a mharbhadh da ghillean oga. Leig iad acair na birlinn as, agus sheol iad a dh-ionnsuidh na Comraich. Dar a rainig iad, char a bhirinn a thoir air tìr, agus dh-fhag iad fuidh *chomraich* na mara i. Agus theirear mar sin a "*Chomraich*" ris an sgìre gus an latha 'n diugh.

Thainig iad a sin gu ruige Gearrloch, agus chuir tighearna Ghearrloch failte 's furan orr', ach dar a chunnaic e nach d'thainig Murchadh, se thubhairt e, "Hüt a düdi fhearabh, thainig sibh dhachaidh agus Murchadh agams fhagail." 'S ann a thubhairt Fionnla Dubh ris gu'm b'fhearr dha dhol a steach, 'sa bheatha fhein a ghleidheadh, "Thigeadh sinne dhachaid agus tu fhein is Murchadh fhagail." Chunnaic e nach robh math a thigh'n'n garg riu. Thug e aoidheachd na h-oidheche dhoibh uile. Anns a mhaduinn sgìt iad, 's chaidh gach fear a rathad fhein dachaidh.

(*Ri leantainn.*)

AN T'ORANAICHE—THE GAELIC SONGSTER.—We are glad to learn that Part I. of Sinclair's Gaelic Songster sold well; and that the publisher will consequently be able to issue Part II. in a few days.

LITERATURE.

THE LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE OF THE SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS;

By JOHN STUART BLACKIE, *Professor of Greek in the University of Edinburgh.*
Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas.

[SECOND NOTICE.]

It is our intention in this notice of the work to deal principally with the author's treatment of that interminable subject—Macpherson and his Ossianic Poems; but before doing so we will point out a few inaccuracies into which the Professor has been led by his guides, and others into which he fell—perhaps not unnaturally, by the similarity of some of the names with which he deals. One of those errors is in making Allan Dall Macdougall, Glengarry's family bard, a *piper*. This is incorrect. But it is clear from another mistake of our author, by which he makes Allan Dall William Ross's father-in-law, that he confused the Glengarry blind bard with John Mackay, the "Blind Piper" of Gairloch, whose daughter was William Ross's *mother*. William Ross, being never married, was no one's son-in-law. In the short biographies of the Gaelic bards our author follows those given by John Mackenzie, in his "Beauties of Gaelic Poetry," published in 1841. While it was correct in 1841 to say that "a simple upright stone in the churchyard of Gairloch stands over" the remains of William Ross, no one will be better pleased than Professor Blackie to learn that, mainly through the exertions of his clansman, George Ross, Flowerdale, a handsome freestone monument was, in 1850, erected on Ross's grave, with a *Gaelic* and English inscription. The English one is:—"In memory of William Ross, some time schoolmaster of Gairloch, better known as the Gairloch Bard, who died in 1790, aged 28 years, this monument is erected over his grave, by a few of his countrymen and others, headed by the amiable and accomplished proprietor of Gairloch, in testimony of their respect, and admiration of his extraordinary genius and great native talent. 1850.

His name to future ages shall descend,
While Gaelic poetry can claim a friend."

The Gaelic is by the late Angus Macdonald, Bard of the Gaelic Society of Inverness, and is as follows:—

ANN AN CUIMHNE

AIR

UILLEAM ROSS,

A BHA UAIR-EIGIN

NA MHAIGHSTIR-SGOIL'

ANN AN GEARROCH;

AIR AITHNEACHADH

NI 'S FEARR FO'N TIODAL

"BARD GHEARRLOCH,"

A CHAOCHAIL ANN AN 1790,

AIG AOIS 28 BLIADHNA.

THA AN CUIMHNEACHAN SO

AIR A CHUIR SUAS,

AIR AN UAIGH AIG

LE TEIRC
 DE A LUCHD-DUTHCHA,
 AGUS MUINNTE EILE,
 LE UACHDRAN CAOIMHNEIL
 AGUS EIREACHDAIL
 GHEARLOCH
 AIR AN CEANN;
 ANN AN TEISTEANAS
 AIR AN SPEIS DHA,
 AGUS AM MOR-MHEAS
 AIR A CHIALL NEO-CHUMANT,
 'S A MHÒR THALANTA NADURACH.
 1850.

AIR AINM-SA CHO FADA BITHIDH AITHRIS
 'S AIG A BHARDACHD GHAELIC BHI THEAS CAIRID.

It will be seen that the laird—Sir Kenneth S. Mackenzie, Bart.—at the early age of eighteen, had given unmistakeable indications of the Celtic spirit which has done him, within the last few years, so much credit in connection with Gaelic subjects. Another and more important error, because it is calculated to perpetuate a state of matters which is not creditable to the Celtic character, is the fact that to this day John Mackenzie, of the "Beauties of Gaelic Poetry," lies buried in the Chapel of the churchyard of Gairloch *with nothing whatever to mark his resting place*, while the Professor gives the incorrect information that "a monumental stone is erected to his (Mackenzie's) memory," on the authority of a paragraph in a contemporary that ought to be better posted up on such a subject.

We hope soon to see a new edition called for, when the author will have an opportunity of correcting these mistakes; and we trust that by that time our Celtic spirit will be roused sufficiently to place the Professor in a position to say truly, "that a monumental stone *has been raised*" to one to whom we are all so much indebted as John Mackenzie of "The Beauties."

The author, premising that the generation for whom he writes has grown up in a general ignorance of all that belongs to Ossian and the Ossianic question, gives a clear and succinct statement of the facts of the case, describing how it was that a small coterie of literateurs in Edinburgh started Macpherson on his tour to the Highlands, after they had examined and admired his translation of the "Death of Oscar" at the request of Home, the author of "Douglas;" how, and with what prospects, Macpherson had been most unwillingly prevailed upon to start on his tour of collection, accompanied by Lachlan Macpherson of Strathmashie, Ewen Macpherson, Knoydart; and Captain Morrison, an excellent Gaelic scholar. We are told of the success of the poems on their appearance in print; how Hume, who doubted "whether the world was the production of an intelligent cause," naturally gave vent to his scepticism in the simple faith of those who believed in the disinterred personality of a blind old Highland bard who could have composed sublime epics centuries before any modern European nation had crept out of its cradle. "It was the natural jealousy of the Teutonic towards the Celtic

race that was working secretly, and the traditional ignorance and insolence of Englishmen—who are generally insolent in proportion to their ignorance, regarding everything Celtic. The great instrument put forth by John Bull on this occasion was the redoubtable Dr Johnson, a strong-minded, vigorous thinker, but gnarled through and through with stiff English prejudice," dealing about in a fashion which set all the laws of civilized intellectual warfare at defiance. The author quotes the doctor's famous opinion of Macpherson and his *Ossian*, in the "Tour to the Hebrides;" and shows that, in accordance with the code of honour then acknowledged among gentlemen, Macpherson felt imperatively called upon to send the doctor a challenge to answer for his impertinence with his life, at the same time depositing his Gaelic MSS. with his London publisher, Mr Becket. The doctor's famous reply is well known, although it is not so generally known that a challenge, in accordance with the custom of the times, was the cause of it; but a letter is printed in Sir J. Sinclair's "Dissertation," from Mr Duncan, who bore the challenge from Macpherson to the doctor, which leaves no doubt whatever as to this having been the case. Various important historical facts are given, and the character and condition of the witnesses from whose evidence we are to form a judgment on this remarkable literary controversy, are carefully and impartially examined, after which the Professor lays down the following:—

PROPOSITION I.—The Highlanders of Scotland, like the pre-Homeric Greeks, and all other intelligent peoples before the currency of a written or printed literature, were possessed of a great mass of floating narrative and lyrical tradition, which was transmitted from father to son, through many generations, and formed the staple of a native, natural, healthy-minded, and invigorating popular education. Of this rich oral literature the traditions about *Ossian* and the Feinn, and the warlike struggles between Scandinavians and Celts in the early history of Scotland and Ireland—which in those early days were one Celtic country—formed a prominent part.

PROPOSITION II.—It is established by an accumulation of evidence from various quarters, such as would satisfy the most scrupulous jury, that there existed in the Highlands, before the time of Macpherson, considerable collections of Gaelic songs and ballads, and other traditional records in the form of manuscript; that Macpherson, in his literary explorations through the islands, got possession of some of the most important of these; that others of them were seen by various persons in the possession of individuals who had no connection with Macpherson, and before he appeared on the scene; further, that Macpherson, before publishing his *Ossian*, spent many months, in the presence of various parties, employed in the decipherment and translation of these manuscripts.

Our author has done excellent and opportune service in publishing some of the evidence from the "Highland Society's Report":—

(A.) From the evidence of the Rev. Andrew Gallie, minister in Kincardine in Ross-shire, 12th March 1799:—

"When he [Macpherson] returned from his tour through the Western Highlands and Islands, he came to my house in Brae-Badenoch. I inquired the success of his journey, and he produced several volumes, small octavo, or rather large duodecimo, in the Gaelic language and characters, being the poems of *Ossian* and other ancient bards.

"I remember perfectly that many of those volumes were, at the close, said to have been collected by Paul Macmhuirich Bard Clanraonuil, and about the beginning of the fourteenth century. Mr Macpherson and I were of opinion, that though the bard collected them, yet that they must have been writ by an ecclesiastic, for the characters and spelling were most beautiful and correct. Every poem had its first letter of its first word most elegantly flourished and gilded; some red, some yellow, some blue, and some green. The material writ on seemed to be a limber, yet coarse and dark vellum. The volumes were bound in strong parchment. Mr Macpherson had them from Clanranald.

"At that time I could read the Gaelic characters, though with difficulty, and did often amuse myself with reading here and there in those poems, while Mr Macpherson was employed on his translation. At times we differed as to the meaning of certain words in the original."

And in another letter, dated 4th March 1801, he added the following characteristic anecdote, along with his own notions about the propriety of Macpherson's procedure in the handling of the translation:—

"I remember Mr Macpherson, when reading the MSS. found in Clanranald's, execrating the bard who dictated to the amanuensis, saying, 'D—n the scoundrel; it is he himself that now speaks, and not Ossian.' This took place in my house, in two or three instances. I thence conjecture that the MSS. were kept up, lest they should fall under the view of such as would be more ready to publish their deformities than to point out their beauties."

Dr Adam Ferguson, an excellent Gaelic scholar, says "that in comparing Macpherson's version with the original, they found it exact and faithful in any parts which they read," and "that the fragments afterwards seen in Macpherson's hands by no means appeared of recent writing—the paper was much stained with smoke, and daubed with Scots snuff."

Lachlan Macpherson of Strathmashie testifies that—

"In the year 1760, I had the pleasure of accompanying my friend, Mr Macpherson, during some part of his journey in search of the poems of Ossian, through the Highlands. I assisted him in collecting them, and took down from oral tradition, and transcribed from old manuscripts, by far the greatest part of those pieces he has published. Since the publication I have carefully compared the translation with the copies of the originals in my hands, and find it amazingly literal, even in such a degree as to preserve, in some measure, the cadence of the Gaelic versification."

Captain A. Morrison, who accompanied Macpherson, testifies—

"That Mr James Macpherson, on his tour through the Highlands and Isles, was a night in his house in Skinnander, Skye; was then collecting the ancient poems, but when in his house had only a few of them. That he gave him (Captain Morrison) some, which he afterwards translated and published, together with Fingalian or old heroic poems not published in his translations, one of them Dargo. That afterwards, in London, he had access to Mr Macpherson's papers; saw the several manuscripts which he translated, in different handwritings—some of them in his own hand, some not—as they were either gathered by himself or sent him from his friends in the Highlands—some of them taken from oral recitation, some from MSS."

As a supplement to this must be added the interesting account of the procedure of the translators in making their version, given by Mr Graham at p. 283 of his dissertation:—

"I have further to state that the Rev. Mr Irvine, of Little Dunkeld, in

Perthshire, permits me to say that Captain Morrison was his intimate friend; that he now possesses in the original ms. much of the correspondence which passed between Macpherson and Morrison during the progress of the collection and translation of Ossian's poems; that Mr Morrison assured him that Macpherson understood the Gaelic language very imperfectly; that he, Mr Morrison, wrote out the Gaelic for him for the most part on account of Macpherson's inability to write or spell the Gaelic properly; that Captain Morrison assisted him much in translating; and that it was their general practice, when any passage occurred which they did not well understand, either to pass it over entirely, or to gloss it over with any expressions that might appear to coalesce easily with the context."

Finally, we have the celebrated declaration by Lachlan MacMhuirich, testifying to the ms. which he had given to Macpherson, but which space forbids us to give. The testimony given in the Highland Society's Report, and of which the Professor has given the above specimens, from many of our Highland clergymen, of whom even Dr Johnson speaks as learned, intelligent, and cultured, is so unmistakeable, and so unhesitatingly given, that, before we can believe Ossian to have been forged, or to any great extent altered from the materials which Macpherson procured in the Highlands, we must first believe that the most cultured and most intelligent of our Highland ministers were *the most wicked, contemptible, and deliberate liars, or that their admitted culture and intelligence had degenerated into simple idiocy*. We, in common with most Highlanders, cannot see our way to accept either alternative, and must therefore continue to believe, with Professor Blackie, that "the Gaelic was not composed by Macpherson, who never professed to be more than a mere translator, and who, according no less to the express testimony of competent persons than to the *ex facie* probabilities of the case, could no more have written a poem like one of Ossian's than he could have composed the Prophecies of Isaiah, or created the Isle of Skye." As to whether the poems are a translation from the English, we refer the reader—as indeed the Professor himself refers the readers of his book—to the valuable papers from his pen on this subject which appeared in the July and August numbers of the *Celtic Magazine*.

We would say, in conclusion, with "Nether Lochaber," that nowhere has the much-vexed Ossian question been at once so fairly and clearly stated as in this volume, nor has anyone else that has meddled with it managed to put all the merits of the controversy *pro* and *con*, so completely within a nutshell as Professor Blackie; so that all who would understand the question aright and *ab initio*, and would wish to read and judge cautiously and carefully for themselves before arriving at any definite decision or conclusion on the matter, have here all the necessary evidence within the compass of a few pages, and better far than if they had to wade through the many volumes and "dissertations" that the subject has from first to last called forth, and in which the real question at issue is only too frequently lost sight of in a cloud of matter entirely irrelevant, or even alien to the subject-proper. The work is one which no one claiming an acquaintance with Celtic subjects can afford to dispense with.

ORAN DO MHAC-IC-ALASTAIR.

KEY C.

: m . f	: s : - l	: d' d' : d' : m . f	: s : - l : s l : -
Faigh a	nuas dhuinn	am bot - al, 'S theid an	deoch so mu'n cuairt,

: d'	: s : - m : m m : - r : d	: m : - r : r r : -
Lìon	bar - rach an cop - an, cum	soc - rach a' chuach,

: d . r	: m : - s : m m : - r : d . d	: d : - r : m d' : -
Tos - da	Choir - neil na feil - e, Leis an	eir - eadh gach buaidh,

: d' . r'	: m' : - r' : d' d' : l : s . s	: s : - l : s m : -
Oigh - re	Chnoid - eart a' bharrach, 'S Ghlinne	Gar - aidh bho thuath.

Thig ort measair a's adhar,
 Agus taghadh nan arm,
 Le d' mhiol-choin air lomhainn,
 'S iad romhad a' falbh:
 'Nuair theid thu do 'n mhonadh,
 Bidh fuil air damh dearg;
 Cas a shiubhal an fhirich,
 Leat 'chinnceadh an t-sealg.
Faigh a nuas, &c.

'S tu marbhaich' a' choilich,
 'S moch a ghòireas air chrann,
 Bhuic bhioraich an t-seilich
 A's eilid nam beann:

'S tric a leag thu na luath's
 Anchaol-rughag's a mhang,
 'Nuair a ruigeadh do luaidhe
 Cha ghluaisceadh iad eang.
Faigh a nuas, &c.

'S tu namhaid na h-eala,
 Lamh a mhealladh a' gheoidh;
 B' fhearr leat 'fhaicinn' s an adhar,
 Na na laidhe air lòn,
 Air iteig ga chaitheamh,
 'S luaidhe neimh' air a thoir
 Bho ghunna beoil chumpaich,
 'S cha bhiodh àin' aige beò.
Faigh a nuas, &c.

NOTE.—The song, of which the above are the first verses, is the composition of *Ailean Dall*, and as its title indicates, is addressed to Colonel Ronaldson Macdonell of Glengarry. The air above given is the one commonly sung in the West of Ross-shire. The time given to some of the notes above—though very effective on an instrument—may not suit the length of some of the syllables. The singer will therefore have to exercise his discretion in giving a pulse or a pulse and a-half, as may be required, to such notes. A popular song, having reference to the Highland evictions, is sung to the same air in Ross-shire. I never saw it in print; nor do I know who composed it. The following verses are all I remember of it:—

Chorus—Cuir a nall duinn am botal
 Cuir an deoch so mu'n cuairt;
 Tha m' inntinnas deònach
 'Dhol a sheòladh a' chuain;
 'Dhol a dh-ionnsaidh an àit'
 An do 'bharc am mòr-abluagh—
 Gu Eilean St Mairi, 's cha
 Bhi mál ga thoirt bhuainn.

Ma's e reithenachan chaoirach
 Na daoine 'bhios ann,
 B'f'dh Albainn an trà so
 'Na fasaich do'n Fhraing;

Thig Bonnaparte thugainn le
 'Chuidesachd a nall,
 'S bithidh ciobairean truaigh dheth,
 'S cha through leinn an call.

'Nuair shineas am bràcsaidh
 'S gach galair bhios ann;
 A' chloimh cha 'n i's taise,
 Ga 'n tachas gu teann—
 Falbhaidh 'n t-uain leis a' chaoile,
 'S gach maoin a bhios ann;
 'S 'nuair thig an Fheil-martainn
 Bithidh 'm mál orr' air chall.

Perhaps some one of the readers of the *Celtic Magazine* will furnish further particulars thereanent.—W. M'K.